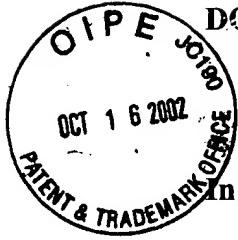


#13k 58/636
PATENT
10/22/02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Application of:

Nicolaides *et al.*

Group Art Unit: 1636

Serial No.: 09/780,675

Confirmation No.: 8276

Filing Date: February 12, 2000

Examiner: B. Loeb

For: METHOD FOR GENERATING
HYPERMUTABLE MICROBESAssistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington D.C. 20231

TECH CENTER 1600/2900

OCT 18 2002

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REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

In response to the Official Action dated July 16, 2002, kindly reconsider allowance of the claims in view of the following amendments and remarks. A Version with Markings to Show Changes Made is included.

In the Claims

- July 16, 2002*
1. (Amended) A method for making hypermutable bacteria comprising the steps of: introducing into a bacterium a polynucleotide encoding a form of a mismatch repair protein under the control of an inducible transcription regulatory sequence; and inducing said inducible transcription regulatory sequence in said bacterium; wherein said form of said mismatch repair polynucleotide exerts a dominant negative effect on mismatch repair when expressed in said bacterium, whereby said bacterium becomes hypermutable.
 2. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the mismatch repair gene is MutH.